

Jan 31 2024

Next meeting **6 PM** Wednesday Feb 28th.

There was general discussion about pinpointing property owners who have grass down to the waterfront and aiming education in their direction. Decision was made to have broad education to all the property owners.

We thought it best to have a broad education on various topics. We may do a summary brochure, but thought it might be better to pick one topic at a time and post it in a variety of locations:

- Facebook pages for McKellar Twp
- MLCA newsletter
- Township web page
- Library workshops
- Sue's Blog (All Things Gardening)
- Summary brochure

We could use our proposed Bylaw for a revised Tree Canopy and Natural Vegetation Policy (this is educational, not enforceable) as background information and to choose topics – there could be 100+ topics generated from that base.

LSEC is putting out a brochure on Protecting the Waters of McKellar Township – we need complementary articles on how to garden without herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers.

F H's farm shoreline near Hurdville has some red pine planted – she may be a resource if we eventually have a program to encourage farmers to plant a low deep-rooted border between the lake and their fields – F is a farmer who was a former member of the Ad Hoc LSEC

MLCA will continue to offer consultations to shoreline owners – we need to look at how LSEC work can complement and enhance that work. Tree and shrub sales at the MLCA sale is gradually increasing; if we continually keep education on various issues this will help keep the ball rolling.

Shoreline consultation thus far has mainly concerned erosion. Help has been given to property owners where the contractor has removed vegetation and put in sand. People putting in sand is a major issue as it is so destructive to the littoral zone. Reporting to MNR is problematic because of the possibility of identification of the reporter to the landowner and resulting poor relations.

Re: Erosion - Need to find out about the boat wake study – Jennifer will try to get in touch with Dr. Chris Houser. He moved from the University of Windsor in the past year to take up the post of Dean of Science at the University of Waterloo. There were people who had instruments to measure wakes at their dock last summer. However, many people who volunteered their properties did not hear back from the researchers.

We are aiming to move the residents from thinking a large expanse of lawn is ideal to wanting to have a smaller piece of lawn for recreation and encouraging indigenous plants. This also involves less work and care of the property – more time for recreation and social life. Less time cleaning up after geese. A more wildlife-friendly property. Less gas, less work with the lawn mower. Attract birds and pollinators.

[Reminder – grass or shallow rooted perennial seed mixes must be planted over a septic bed]. We need a planned, step-wise multi-year programme.

Can we eventually connect with contractors and real estate agents?

Chris and Sue are doing a daylong McKellar Library sponsored workshop on Cottage Country Gardening on May 18th with questions and answers. Jennifer will attend to take notes on Q & A which can serve to make postings. This is timed to be on the same day as the MLCA tree and shrub pick up at the community centre.

We could leave brochures at the library.

Put guidelines on MLCA website.

We could have a series of postings to help people get in touch with nature – what's happening in the natural world – plants and wildlife? Eg. What's happening in March – look for skunk cabbage emerging, buds on the tamarack/larch trees, spring peepers. Put people gradually in closer touch with nature and help them grow an appreciation for the natural world around them.

[Note: there will be a loon count on the four long weekends this year].

[Another note: MLCA is holding a workshop at the community centre on Saturday morning April 27 on building turtle boxes (protect turtle eggs from predators). Georgian Bay Biosphere presentation. Looking for roaming carpenters to help participants assemble kits].

Sue and Chris will each do articles on suggested plantings along shorelines that can tolerate wet to moist soil conditions.

Suggestions for topics – open for changes and additions and topics and timing

March – What's happening in the natural world at the cottage – brief article to post

April – Turtle Box workshop – O2 level in the lake before the ice comes off (generally what affects O2 level)?

May – erosion, loon count, plants that like wet feet

June – Long rooted plants prevent erosion from silt leaving the property during heavy rains

July gardening without fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides

August

September

October

November – what do you do with leaves – this was a request posted on Facebook late last fall.